

# REMARKS

ON THE

PROVISION THAT SHOULD BE MADE

FOR THE

CHILDREN OF MISSIONARIES.

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AUGUST, 1855.



## REMARKS.

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ONE of the most difficult questions to be solved in the work of Christian Missions to the heathen is, What should be done for the children of the missionaries?

This question can arise only in the Missions of Protestant Churches. The Roman Catholic "missioners," as they are called in the Annals of the Faith, like the clergy of that Church in Christian countries, are "forbidden to marry;" and a sad commentary on this unnatural and unchristian prohibition might be read at many a station in heathen lands. The Protestant Church is in no danger of imitating the example of Rome in this matter. Some advantages may, indeed, be conceded to the plan of employing only unmarried persons in the missionary work; and eminent Protestants have advocated this plan, particularly the celebrated missionary, Schwartz, whose views are given by his accomplished biographer, without material dissent.\* The expense of unmarried missionaries is less;† their freedom and range of movement is greater; their sacrifice of family affection, viewed with reference to the subject of this paper, is, of course, unknown. On the other hand, the moral influence of the missionary, in

\* See Memoirs, vol. ii., pp. 341-345.

† The expense of the Romanist Mission in Siam, for the salaries of its French bishop and nine European missionary priests, is reported by the bishop as only 7,150 *francs*, or about \$1,500.

most instances, is greatly reduced; the invaluable aid of Christian women, in their highest sphere, is withholden; the example of a Christian family—with woman honored and children under holy nurture—is all unseen. The great law of our race is everywhere in force: “it is not good for man to be alone” is true since the fall as before, and true with deeper meaning at a missionary station than in a Christian parish. Yet would we lay down no Procrustean rule here, and if a man would probably remain unmarried as a minister at home, we should be glad to see him go unmarried as a missionary—provided he were a man of firm and holy will. Many wise observers think that ministers in this country commonly marry too soon after leaving the Seminary; it may be doubted, at any rate, whether it would not be well for some of our missionaries to go single to their work, expecting after having learnt the language and acquired some experience, to return on a short visit to their friends, with permission afterwards to “lead about a sister, a wife.” In some missionary fields this course might well be followed.

The question of making some provision for the children of missionaries is one having manifold relations, some of which are of great delicacy. In general, we think it wise for the State and the Church to legislate as little as possible for parents in the training and disposal of their children. We also think it wise for their friends to help them in these responsible duties, not by taking their weighty charge off their hands, but by kind sympathy, and by observing with them the leadings of Divine Providence as interpreted by the Word of God. Our purpose, therefore, in this paper, is not to recommend any substitute for parental authority or duty, nor

to advocate the transfer to other parties—whether to the Church at large, the Missionary Boards, or personal friends—of the duty which we believe God has placed primarily on parents ; but rather, to offer some remarks, which may help to form a correct public opinion on this important subject.

The work of Missions in some of its most important features, is the common work of the Church. Most Christians could not take any active part in this work, but for the agency of missionaries ; on the other hand, missionaries commonly could not preach Christ among the heathen, but for the pecuniary support of the churches at home. There is here a relation of mutual dependence in the fulfilment of a sacred duty. It is not different in nature from that which subsists between ministers and their congregations in this country, but its circumstances in some respects are very different. In both cases, the laborer is worthy of his hire, and “they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar.” The provision to be made for the support of these laborers may differ very widely in different parts of the great field, but in all places it should be sufficient to free their minds from worldly care, and allow them to devote their whole time and strength to the service of the Gospel. Hence this provision must have respect to their families. Their children must be supported, and should receive such a degree of education as will fit them for the duties of future life.

We ask not that every minister’s or missionary’s son should be sent to college and prepared for some learned profession, or every daughter placed at some expensive seminary. Some parents are unreasonable ; if they were not in the sacred office, their children would not

in fact enjoy the advantages which are sometimes weakly claimed for them as a right. There are many ministers and missionaries too, whose worldly position and comfort are immeasurably greater than they would be in any other calling; just as there are others, in noble numbers, who might have been men of property and distinction among their fellows in worldly pursuits, but who yet regret not their sacrifices for Christ's sake. We plead for no mere favoritism towards the children of either pastors or missionaries; but it seems to be not unreasonable that their parents should be able to exercise a discretion as to the extent of their education, not too much fettered by a narrow income. When health, talents, and disposition concur, the means of gaining a good education would be withholden at a sad loss to the Church and the world. And in the case of all, the advantages of common education and Christian training should be within reach. All this at the least must be considered as implied in the provision to be made for the children of ministers—whether they are pastors or missionaries. This, indeed, we suppose to be the view commonly taken of this matter in our churches. The salaries of ministers are, or ought to be, large enough to cover this kind of expense. Otherwise, a pastor is at liberty to seek for a congregation able or willing to give him a better support. He may, however, avail himself of means auxiliary to his salary, ---such as cultivating a small farm, teaching or giving lessons in a school, &c.,---in order to provide for the support and education of his family; though it is obvious to suggest that in most cases this is done at the expense of the spiritual interests of his congregation.

In the case of foreign missionaries, the theory of the



Church on this point is a good one. Provision for their support is made, on a moderate but sufficient scale, varying according to the expense of living in different countries, and also according to the size and health of different families. They are not expected to engage in any occupation to increase their pecuniary support. To do so would be an implied breach of contract with the churches in whose service they have been sent forth, and would be a sufficient reason for recalling them from the mission work. It would imply on their part either such a worldly spirit, or such a want of prudence, as would unfit them for usefulness, and deprive them of the confidence and sympathy of their brethren and the churches. We are aware that some of the Independent missionaries have been sent to particular fields upon only a partial salary, and with the understanding that they were to earn the rest of their support by their own exertions ; but neither in theory nor in practice can this method of proceeding be commended to general approval. Commonly it is not practicable for a foreign missionary to engage in such occupation as would add to his pecuniary means. Some, however, will lay by money out of almost any salary, and others will hardly be able to live on the most liberal salary, so that there will be practical inequalities under any system of support ; while it may be expected that there will be cases among foreign missionaries, as unhappily among ministers at home, of men so keenly awake to the advantages of wealth, that their distinctive character and title may become merged in that of a printer, a physician, an interpreter, or a *chargé d'affaires*---sad change ! It is not for the children of these we write these pages.

The support of missionaries is usually, in fact, made on a scale that provides for their children as well as for themselves, so long as the children remain under the paternal roof. The English Societies commonly, it is understood, assign a fixed amount, irrespective of the size of the family, and the missionary defrays all or nearly all expenses, not strictly public, out of his salary. The American Boards, we believe, mostly adopt what may be called an equitable system—assigning a salary to each married missionary, (smaller in amount to one unmarried,) with a separate allowance for each child, and in addition furnishing a house, necessary medical expenses, and expenses for travelling on missionary tours; making in the aggregate, we presume, a smaller sum than is received by the English and Scotch missionaries in the same countries, though probably yielding as much comfort to the missionary, and better promoting his usefulness in the end. This, at any rate, is our impression, which is stated with diffidence. The reason for referring to this point at all, is its bearing on the question under consideration. An ample, round salary may enable a missionary with a small family to meet all the expenses of his children's education; and, if he is prudent, to make some provision for the evening of life. We confess to a feeling of respect for this plan, viewed under certain aspects. It has, however, its other side; and, referring to our present topic, we think its tendency is adverse to that feeling of Christian sympathy on the part of the churches, without which scholastic arrangements will fail to meet the wants of the case. To this point we shall have occasion to revert in another place. The equitable plan, as we have termed it, makes no provision for the future,

which is left by faith to Providence, but it admits of a wise adaptation to the circumstances and events of a missionary's life. It is a minor though an important recommendation of it, that it best husbands the funds devoted by Christians to the spread of the Gospel.

The real difficulty in the case begins, not commonly while the children are at home with their parents, but when they are sent to this country for their education. Greater expense is then ordinarily incurred, and arrangements must be made for their best training which depend for success on the co-operation of Christian friends.

Here we meet, however, with views which, if generally adopted, would supersede the necessity of any further consideration of the subject. Some regard this separation of children from their parents as a thing altogether unjustifiable. They object to what they call this transfer of parental obligations to the hands of strangers. They express their surprise that any parents could consent to send away their young and helpless offspring from their side, to seek a new home in a distant country. They regard this measure as unnatural and unchristian. These objections are not well founded. The conduct thus censured proceeds really from a depth of natural feeling, which only a parent in similar circumstances can appreciate. Their deep concern as parents for the highest welfare of their children is the cause of missionaries consenting to this great sacrifice. In this respect they do no more than is done every month by merchants, officers in the army, members of the civil service, medical men, and others, in India and China; men too seldom governed by

religious views, but who, from deep parental feeling, send their children to Europe for their education. The heart of a pious parent more deeply than any other feels the weight of some of the reasons for this separation. This measure, therefore, is neither unnatural nor unchristian; indeed, the principle involved in these separations is one which is often exemplified; separations between parents and children are perhaps too common here at home. Children are sent to distant boarding-schools, or to be trained for business in places hundreds of miles away, whence they seldom or never return; or they are given to friends for adoption. In these cases the good of the child is the ground of the separation. For the same reason our missionary brethren consent to the education of their children in a distant country. We can see nothing wrong or unjustifiable in this.

But while the judgment may be satisfied, the heart will often bleed. In no other respect do we so deeply sympathize with our missionary brethren in their trials as in this separation from their children. We freely confess that the bare thought of it often unmans us; what then must the reality of it be? Only divine help, surely, could enable some parents to consent to such a measure. "O, Saviour, I do this for thee!"—the words of a missionary mother on the shore of Burmah, looking for the last look at her little ones on the ship that was to bear them to a distant country---"O, Saviour, I do this for thee!" have always been to us words of the deepest and tenderest meaning, the language of the true mother and the eminent saint. How does one's heart beat in sympathy with that Christian mother in her great sacrifice! Blessed be our Saviour's name!



His heart tenderly felt for his servant's grief, and his grace was her help in the time of need.\*

A missionary in China thus describes a similar trial :  
*“Wednesday, 4th.* Remained on board the ‘Adelaide,’ she being detained for the want of a full crew.  
 . . . I was busy with fixing up the little berth that was to be my poor boy's sleeping place. These details may seem foolish and over minute to those whose experience of a voyage has been confined to a two or three weeks' passage across the Atlantic in a well-furnished packet ; but to send off half round the world, in a transient merchant ship, all that the heart holds dearest, is a very different thing. Although on this oc-

\* We add here some extracts from the letters of this excellent Christian woman :

“Our children are but another name for self. You are right in supposing that I have many anxious thoughts about their future lot ; how many and how anxious, no human being can ever know. . . From experience and observation, my own as well as others, I am convinced that our children cannot be properly educated and fitted for the greatest usefulness in this country ; that I shall wrong my children, seriously wrong them, by suffering them to grow up, inhaling, day after day, and year after year, the fatal miasma with which the whole moral atmosphere of this country is so fearfully impregnated. On this point my judgment has long been convinced. Shall we, then, go home with our children, and see them educated under the genial influence of a Christian sky ? Or shall we send them away, and commit their best interests, for time and for eternity, to stranger hands, who do not and cannot feel a mother's responsibility, however much and conscientiously they may strive to perform a mother's duties ?

“As a general rule, I believe a mother's duty to her children is second only to her duty to her Creator. How far missionary mothers may be exempt from this rule, it is difficult to decide. A mother who has spent eight, ten, or twelve of her best years among heathens may be expected to be well acquainted with their language, manners, customs, and habits of thought and feeling. She has proved herself their friend, and gained their confidence and affection. She is, as it were, just prepared for extensive usefulness. At this period shall she go and leave them, with none to tell them of Him who came to ransom their souls from sin and its penalty ? Or, if another is raised up to fill her place, it must be years—years during which many precious immortals must go down to a dark, a fearful eternity, ere she is prepared to labor efficiently among them.

“I see no other way than for each individual mother prayerfully to consider the subject, and let her own conscience decide as to her duty. As to my own feelings on this subject, after long, serious, and prayerful consideration, I have come

casion my own share in the general sorrow was the least of any, perhaps, yet it was with no common tremor of heart that I sat and watched my child sleeping the last sleep that I should watch over for many a month—for years, perhaps—perhaps forever. Early in the evening he had crept into my arms and gone to sleep there. It was getting late before I undressed him and laid him down in his berth. What prayers were offered and what tears were shed beside him, he, dear child, knew not; but they are known to the God and Father of us all, to whose holy keeping I committed him.”

One of the Presbyterian missionaries in the eastern Pacific, says of his children, “They cannot be brought up in these islands, at least for years. You may rest assured that we should never think of parting with our children, if we did not consider it an imperative duty. Of all our trials in this dark land, this is the greatest.”

Indeed, so severe and full of suffering is this trial that we need not wonder if some missionary parents are not equal to its agony. They should have our pity rather than our censure; and we may think of them as those to whom our Saviour’s words are applicable,

to the conclusion that it is best to send our eldest two to America in the course of another year, should a good opportunity offer. . . . This surely forms the climax of a missionary’s sacrifices.” Again: “If it were not for the consciousness of doing right, of being in the path of duty, I could not, no, I could not sustain it. . . . Pray for me; pray for those dear children who are so soon to be orphans, at an age, too, when they most need the watchful care of parental affection. This thought is at times almost too much for my aching, bursting heart to endure. Had not my Saviour, yes, and a compassionate Saviour, added these two words: ‘and children’ to the list of sacrifices for his sake, I might think it more than was required.” Again: “Shall we withhold our Isaac? No; may we rather strive to commit ourselves and our precious offspring in faith to his care, who has said, ‘Leave thy fatherless children to me.’ They are in one sense orphans. But if rendered so by what we feel to be obedience to our heavenly Father’s will, will He not be to them a father and protector? Will He not more than supply the place of the most affectionate earthly parents?”—*Memoir of Mrs. Comstock.*—pp. 184-186.

“All men cannot receive this saying. . . . He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.”

Conceding and feeling all this, we yet consider it to be expedient for missionaries, in some countries, to send their children to their Christian friends for education, and for such future settlement in life as Providence may appoint. The reasons are: 1. The great difficulty of bringing them up in a Christian manner amongst a heathen people. 2. The impracticability of obtaining for them such an education, in some heathen countries, as ought to satisfy the mind of a Christian parent. 3. The impossibility in ordinary cases of procuring for them, in a country like India, for instance, such employment when they reach adult years, as would yield them a competent support. Each of these reasons might be largely developed. Other reasons might be stated, but they are perhaps reducible to these three, which are only too conclusive against a parent's fond wish to keep his children with him. And if those who have little sympathy with the missionary cause still object and say, that a parent ought not, without the strongest reasons, to place his family in such circumstances as these, our reply is obvious. The missionary parent has the strongest reasons for his conduct. He would be in the same class with many others—merchants, military and naval officers, civilians—if he were led to a heathen country only by secular aims, and then were influenced by mere parental feeling; but his position in a heathen land must be accounted for in a different way, and measures which he is then constrained to adopt for his children's welfare, stand on holier ground. To make our justification of his conduct complete, we must consider the main thing in it—the Chris-

tian principle which underlies not only this but the whole work of missions. It is the love of Christ, constraining the Church to obey his commandment and to seek to promote his glory in the salvation of lost men, that is the main-spring of the missionary enterprise. This it is which leads men to become missionaries. It is this which enables them to encounter hardships and practice self-denial. This could make them willing, and has made hundreds ready, not to count even their own lives dear unto them, but to press on in the greatest work on the earth, even until the last hour of life. And where the love of Christ is thus shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, there will undoubtedly be grace given, abundant to sustain the feeblest laborer under the heaviest trial, and glorious to reward every sacrifice. He cannot fail to receive the fulfilment of the Saviour's promise to those who have left all and followed him.—Mark x. 28–30.

The tearful farewells at the mission station have been spoken; the last kisses, exchanged. The little travellers, under the charge of some kind protector—perhaps some brother-missionary—have made their long voyage; they have landed on their father's native shores, where everything is new and strange to them. How shall they be received? Surely, with the warmest cordiality and the tenderest sympathy by every father and every mother in the Church of Christ. What shall now be done for them? This is the practical question before us. It is not enough to feel true sympathy for them, as lambs of Christ's flock, who have been brought to us in his holy providence under such peculiar and touching circumstances. What provision should be made for their best comfort and future welfare?



Various things have been spoken of in different quarters. One of the most obvious is a school for this class of children. To this they could go at once upon their arrival, and there they could remain under kind and Christian instruction for several years. The minds of parents would be free from anxiety as to the immediate disposal of their children on reaching this country; and the difficulty would be avoided of seeking homes for them in the community at large. The Church would feel that she had made some tangible and substantial provision for those who are recognized as having claims for more than mere sympathy. This plan, moreover, has been adopted in England, and is found by experience to work well there. Let each Missionary Board, therefore, establish a school of this kind. All the missionaries might not avail themselves of such a school, but many would be glad to do so. The expense of it might be considerable, but would be insignificant in comparison with its object. This, we think, is a fair representation of the argument for a school; our wish is to state it in its full strength. We have even tried to convince our own mind that this measure would be a good one.

It would be no difficult matter to set a school of this kind on foot. The pecuniary means for it could no doubt be obtained. And a suitable superintendent might be found among some of the well-qualified brethren, who have been compelled to return home by the failure of their own or their wives' health. It would be easy to place the children in this school, but one of the serious considerations connected with it is readily suggested at this point. It is not wise to begin a measure without looking to its end; the children could

be easily placed in the school, but how would they get out of it? Suppose them to be entered at ten or twelve years of age, and carefully watched over and instructed until they are sixteen or eighteen, what is then to be done? They have been separated from those who, next to their parents, are their natural guardians. They have not been in the way of learning much about openings for employment in life, or of making those friendships which contribute so largely to one's future success. No instance is known in which boarding-pupils form many ties with the neighborhood around the school. Ties of youthful friendship are created mostly in the families where they are brought up, in the congregations where they worship, or in the community where they live; but missionary children in a separate school are not only far from their own homes, but remote also from the friends of their parents, and would form a little community, almost a separate caste of their own.

We make something, but not very much, of what is sometimes stated as an objection to a separate school, that the children would bring to it their respective contributions of unhappy influences from their native lands, and would thus injure each other—one bringing a Siamese, another a Chinese, and a third a Hindu habit of evil, to form a common stock. Those who allege this forget that the earliest years of every child are spent under a mother's influence; and though we have read of an English missionary mother's distress, on discovering that her little daughter had been taught by its *ayah* to worship a hideous idol whenever she passed its temple in her morning walk, yet we believe that, in the earlier years of most children, the influence of their parents is altogether the most controlling. This

accounts for what we have been delighted to see, in the case of several children of missionaries, that the impress of their parents, especially of their mothers, was so beautifully marked on their offspring, that they would suffer by comparison with no children of our acquaintance, and were far superior in correct and delicate deportment to the children of many Christian families amongst ourselves. If, however, as to some extent might be conceded, faults and evil habits were implanted, a school of this kind would offer certain advantages for their removal.

We therefore set this matter out of view, and admitting the excellence of the school, we yet come in a few years to the termination of their connection with it. In some cases, through gifts and grace, our young friends might be encouraged to look forward to a return to their parents to join them in their great work—the daughters earlier, the sons after the usual studies,—in their case going from the school to a college, and thence to the theological seminary. Others might possess talents worthy of culture for professional life, though without piety, and they, equally with others still, who should not be advised “to go through college,” would certainly find, we apprehend, great embarrassment in settling their plans for future years, from their isolation in this missionary school during so long a period. In the case of girls, this would be very serious. “How shall they *leave* the school?” we once asked a warm advocate of this plan—a most liberal friend of missionary children. “How shall they leave it? Why, just as orphan children leave the Asylum.” Practically, we have little doubt, it would come to this, and then the days of such

a school would be numbered. Few missionaries would then send their children to it.

This suggests an objection already adverted to—the caste-like aspect of such a school. Its scholars would be all of one general class, marked by its peculiar features, and but slightly connected with the general community. It is not an advantage, as we suppose, to the missionary cause, that its agents should be fenced off from their brethren in the ministry by such marked boundary lines as commonly exist, implying that most ministers should not be missionaries, and *vice versa* ; in this country, the term missionary, as a title for a portion of our ministers—those whose support is partly provided by other congregations than their own, is an unfortunate word, which tends to separate respectable and worthy ministers from the standing of their brethren in the eye of the Church, and thereby to lessen their influence. We do not like any permanent lines or titles of separation between our ministers, which can be avoided. If this remark may not be considered of much weight, as applicable to missionaries, its propriety will hardly be called in question as to their children. It cannot be deemed desirable to have them held up always before the public attention as a separate class, which would be one result of placing them in a school of their own. Some measure of sympathy might thereby be awakened for them at first, but not standing in the usual bonds which unite our children to the churches and the community, and supported from the contributions of the former, we should greatly fear that they would eventually occupy a lower instead of a higher place than that occupied by other children.

Nor is this apprehension allayed by the experiment



of such schools in England ; indeed, the existence and the success of these schools may be owing partly to the existence of a feeling unknown in our churches. In England, we have understood, missionaries are not commonly regarded as standing on a level with the regular ministers at home. In the Established Church, it is a rare thing for a “university-man” to go as a missionary. The Church Missionary Society educates a large number of its missionaries at a school of its own in Islington. Some of the missionaries of the London Missionary Society were educated at a similar though smaller seminary in one of the suburbs of London, as formerly at Gosport. The topic is not a pleasant one, nor will we cite further evidence. It is the happiness of the missionary cause in this country that its servants are men of the same family connections, social *status*, collegiate and seminary training, and average degree of talent and learning, with their brethren in the ministry ; and the minister here would only excite a smile at his vanity or a frown at his presumption, who would speak of his foreign brethren in terms of less respect than he would apply to their classmates at home. Ever may this parity continue ! And it ever will, if the spirit of the Gospel continues to animate our churches. If our Episcopal friends are right, and James was bishop of Jerusalem, even they would not claim for him a higher estimation than for Paul. In the early age of the Church, missionaries were certainly not held in less honor than pastors.

With this English feeling in our view concerning missionaries themselves, we can readily see how the plan of a separate school for their children would be received with favor ; while the parents, most deeply concerned

in the measure, would be little likely to demur to this inferior social aspect of it. Besides this, however, there are more tangible points of difference between such schools in England and this country. In either case a guardian is necessary for each child, who must receive the scholar on the close of his term, or in the event of his dismissal from school. The guardian would of course be some relative or personal friend of the missionary, who, in a little island like Great Britain, would be within a few hours' communication of the school, while in this country he might be living in Wisconsin or Alabama. In the former, this guardian performs an important service in finding a suitable home for his protégé after leaving the school, and in making arrangements for his settlement in life, being assisted in this by his intimate personal acquaintance with his ward; in this country, we fear this guardianship, in most cases, would be a merely nominal thing. The expense of such school, moreover, is a serious consideration. Dr. Anderson, in his excellent paper on this general subject, at the meeting of the American Board in 1846, states the average expense of each boy in one of the English schools, at two hundred dollars. Of this, seventy-five dollars were paid by the missionary—a sum which a man with a small family could easily pay out of his English salary, but which might be burdensome if his family were large. The remaining one hundred and twenty-five dollars were paid, not by the Missionary Society, but by school funds, furnished of course by Christian friends. A school of this kind here, would require a not less expensive establishment—buildings, superintendent, teachers, matron, servants, food, fuel, books, &c.,—and would require a considerable number

of scholars, in order that the expense of each should not exceed two hundred dollars. For a much less sum, we think better advantages can be obtained here in a simpler way.

One of the greatest objections to this school-plan is, that it is making the provision for missionary children too purely a matter of scholastic arrangement. It is possible even for missionary parents to make too much of this aspect of the matter, and to think that if they had only money enough, it would be easy to provide for their children; but they will, of course, keep in view the peculiarities of character and the probabilities of future employment in life of their children, which must materially modify their wishes and plans in regard to them. The Christian public here, however, having no such tender personal interest in them, or knowledge of them, may quite too easily learn to feel satisfied with what has been done, when a good and perhaps costly public school has been provided; and the manifold other relations of the subject may too easily slide out of sight.

Dismissing this project, as not expedient in this country, the question recurs—What shall be done? This question, we believe, does not admit of a categorical answer. Indeed, our remarks in answer to it, must necessarily take a somewhat “point-no-point” character. Arrangements for the education and settlement of children must have respect to so many things, general and particular, that he should not be considered a wise man who would undertake to speak positively on the subject. The case of each child must be viewed on all sides, in the light not only of scriptural principles, but

of many providential events. Remembering all this, we yet venture to suggest several things in reply.

Let us keep in mind that the missionary himself must take the responsibility of answering this question. His course may be much influenced by what the churches may do, or may, in his view, leave undone ; but his duty as a parent is to be determined, in no small degree, by his actual circumstances ; and these will be found to differ in the case of each family. There are missionaries, whose immediate relatives would afford homes for their children, not only the best but the only homes they could be allowed to have ; and this, in some cases, without being willing to receive any allowance from a Missionary Board for their support. There are others, whose private means are ample to defray the expenses of their children's education. There are others still, whose relatives or personal friends would gladly take the charge of the children, upon receiving the amount of the additional expense thereby incurred, without expecting, or being willing, indeed, to receive compensation, their sympathy and service being such as no money could either purchase or remunerate. There are yet others who, in the ordering of Providence, have made such acquaintances, or by the example of their own self-denying and humble piety have obtained such an interest in the affections of some of God's people, that their children have, for their sakes, found homes of the best kind among families in nowise related to them. In such cases as these, the duty of a missionary parent would seem to be plain enough. He should thankfully avail himself of such opportunities of providing for his children.

It is among relatives and friends, not having suffi-



cient means of their own, that most missionaries will probably find homes for their offspring. So long as our missionaries belong to the same classes of society with their brethren in the ministry at home, there will be few of them without relatives and personal friends, qualified to be the best guardians of their children; and so long as the missionary cause rests on the command and love of Christ, and the self-denial of his servants, there will commonly be found among these personal relations and friends those who will gladly share the burdens of the missionaries with them. Nor should we think well of any man who would pass by his own kindred, in seeking a home for his child, even though their circumstances might not now altogether agree with the social position to which he may have risen; often the best home which a child away from its parents could find, would be in the family of some plain farmer, whose daily kindness and Christian nurture and example would be above all price.

There are other missionaries, however, whose children are not provided for in any of the ways yet specified. In most cases, we suppose, it would be practicable to secure homes for these in respectable Christian families, and in good boarding-schools, in such cases as call for superior educational advantages. Many of these schools are under the charge of Christian instructors, who feel a deep interest in the missionary work. Indeed, we have known quite a number of children of missionaries, who have enjoyed the great advantages of such schools, on terms so low as merely to defray cost-expenses, and in some instances without any charge. This is a method of doing good that can be confidently

recommended ; it imparts pleasure and benefit to both giver and receiver. Those who cannot themselves be missionaries, may in this way greatly aid the work of missions, while the arrangements requisite for their schools allow them to receive a new member into their household, often, with little inconvenience. For those children, whose delicate health, or whose want of talent, renders a boarding-school education unadvisable, no better home could be provided than might be found in many excellent families, at a moderate expense.

To defray the expense, when it ought to be borne by the Church, some would raise a separate fund, the interest of which could be applied to this object. This fund, under the charge of the Executive Committee, would give them liberty to provide for cases requiring aid, without drawing on the moneys given for the general support of missionary work. Persons having property to give or to bequeathe to benevolent purposes, might be led to take a special interest in a fund of this kind. We need enter into no discussion here of the expediency of endowments for religious purposes ; the common practice of our churches sanctions such provision for education. We have endowments for theological seminaries, colleges, and academies, and for scholarships in all these, which are mostly the fruits of Christian piety. No better object could ask for aid than the one now under consideration. We fear, however, that serious evils might easily connect themselves with a fund of this kind ; and we specify, first, its liability to be too much relied upon by missionaries and their friends here ; and, next, its danger of leading the churches to rest satisfied with having furnished the money required, and overlooking other things more important.

Others propose to endow scholarships in particular seminaries and colleges, to be available for the children of missionaries. In principle, this is a measure of the same kind, and it might be attractive to those benevolent persons who feel a special interest in some particular institution. This and the plan of a fund receive the preference of some of those to whose judgment and missionary experience, the writer of these remarks is accustomed to defer with the greatest respect. Nor in what follows would he be understood as opposing them.

The simplest way of doing anything is commonly the best way. It would seem to answer well, to place the necessary outlay for these children among the current expenses of the missions to which they belong, which is the plan heretofore adopted. This would be to adopt for them here the rule, under which their expenses were defrayed before they left their father's house, and it would be simply giving to their parents such a support as the churches all recognize as reasonable and obligatory.

Whether, on this plan, it is best to assign a uniform and definite sum, and if so what the amount should be, are questions to be decided by experience. Some of the Missionary Boards in this country have been paying sixty dollars a year, until the children reach a certain age. This sum is confessedly inadequate to meet all the expenses, in cases where these must all be defrayed by parents having no relations or friends able or willing to receive their children, and also in cases where missionaries wish to place them in schools or at college. In the former instances, it would seem but proper that a larger sum should be allowed; in the latter, there is room for correspondence. Few missionaries or pas-

tors would claim, as a right, that the Church should give them such a salary as would enable them to send their children to boarding-schools and colleges, however desirable this might be in some cases; and fewer still would make the want of such a salary a reason for giving up the missionary or pastoral work. And, as the case stands between pastors and missionaries, while the former can in various ways save expense, and yet secure advantages for their children, and should not therefore complain if the latter receive a larger support for their families, placed as they are in such different and infinitely more trying circumstances; yet, on the other hand, we would not desire a wholesale allowance to our missionary friends. A superior boarding-school or college education for each child in a large family, would involve a large expense; the greater part of the ministers in this country are quite unable to give such advantages to all their children, perhaps not to any of them. In adjusting this matter, care must be taken not to advocate such views as would weaken, instead of deepening, the sympathy that ought to exist between the churches and the missionaries. We have always deprecated a method of discussing this subject, which would result in placing whatever is done on mercantile ground—so much to be paid for so much done or so much suffered.

Avoiding this extreme, we yet cannot but recognize the claims of missionaries for their children on the judgment and the sympathy of the churches. Suitable provision ought to be made, assuredly; what shall be considered suitable, is the question. We would leave it to the missionary to decide as to this; but with this proviso, that when his plans involved much expense, the



stewards of the missionary funds of the churches should be considered free to withhold their concurrence. The result might be the withdrawal of the missionary from the field of labor, following his convictions, whether right or wrong ; but this would be a less evil than a virtually irresponsible use of missionary moneys, which would soon end in disaster to the work at home and abroad.

There are certain advantages in having a uniform and fixed allowance for each child. It incurs no risk of complaints of partiality, and leaves parents at liberty to make their own plans. It may be the best method, on the whole, though it might be expedient to modify a rule of this kind, so far as to admit of a larger amount in cases that seem to require it. There is need of discrimination in cases that differ.

One good result may be gained by the discussion of this general subject, that of turning the attention of Christian families to it. There must be hundreds, if not thousands, of families in our churches who each could give a comfortable home to a missionary child, and act as parents in concurrence with its own parents—thus securing for it the best training and education, and making the most suitable arrangements for the future life of their adopted ward. We refer particularly to families without children, or who have lost their own children, and to families also of good means and larger hearts,—though not so much to those who possess large wealth, as to those who have gained the request of Agur. Their own happiness, especially in the declining years of life, would surely be promoted in this way. We could cite a signal example of this, were it allowable to refer publicly to friends in private life, the evening of whose days is rendered more beautiful by the love and reverence of

two Christian women, daughters of missionaries, wives held in honor by their friends, who honor themselves by their grateful duty to their foster parents. The expense which in this way would be saved to the missionary cause is the least recommendation of this plan. The benefit thereby conferred on its recipients is such as can in no other way be obtained—*family homes in this country being the great want of missionary children.*

We must conclude these remarks. They are already too extended. Yet we cannot close without expressing our firm confidence, that God will take good care of these children. They are the children of the covenant. They were baptized among the heathen, early members of the Christian Church in lands now dark, first fruits of a great harvest of children which shall there be dedicated to God in his holy ordinance. The God of their parents will be their guide and portion. The prayers and sympathies of the churches will accompany them. Indeed, we believe, in nearly all cases they have been well cared for here; and some of them have gone back to join their parents in their work, or to carry forward what they had begun. Increasing numbers may be expected to imitate this good example, as the prayers of the people of God abound more on their behalf; and those of them who are not called to this work will be found amongst the true friends of missions at home. All this we expect to witness for our missionary brethren and their children, because God is a covenant-keeping God, and at the same time because he is the God of Missions.